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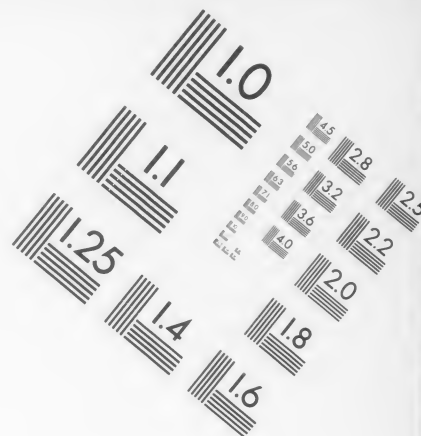
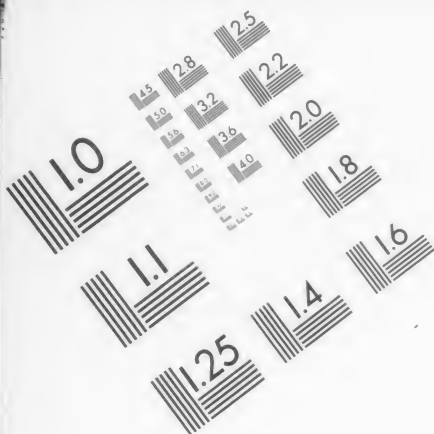


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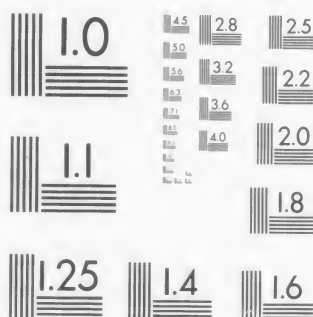
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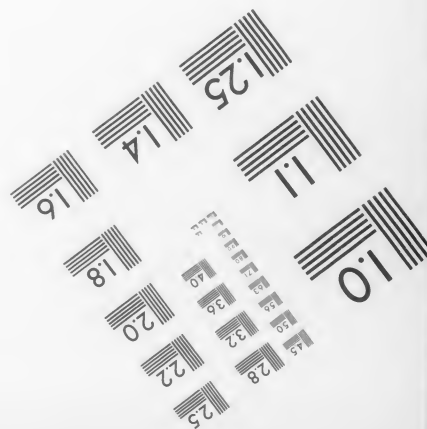
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An Address Before
The New York Latin Club by
Professor M H Morgan of
Harvard University

Delivered Nov 22 1902 at The Hotel Albert

ENTITLED

MISCELLIONES

Reprint No 2

From The New York Latin Leaflet, 1902-'03

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TO
ARTHUR S SOMERS
NICHOLAS MURRAY BUTLER
FREDERICK D MOLLENHAUER

The following address is dedicated by The New York
Latin Club in recognition of their moral support
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MISCELLIONES

"Miscelliones appellantur qui non certae sunt sententiae, sed variorum mixtorumque indicorum sunt."

On the 24th of May, 1660, Mr. Samuel Pepys, the great English annalist, made the following entry in his diary:

"Up, and *made* myself as fine as I could, with the linning stockings on and wide canons that I bought the other day at Hague."

But some time later we find the following entry:

"31st.—To church; and with my mourning very handsome, and new periwig, *make* a great show."

Is there a tailor among us, or lover of fine clothes, who can tell us whether there is anything much more animating in a suit of mourning and a periwig than in a pair of imported stockings with wide canons? If not, why should Mr. Pepys have used the present tense "make" in his narrative of the one, but the past tense "made" in his narrative of the other?

Let us now go back some two thousand years and examine the familiar opening lines of Xenophon's *Anabasis*:

"To Darius and Parysatis *are born* two sons, the elder Artaxerxes, and the younger Cyrus." But in the next sentence: "Now when Darius lay sick and suspected that his end was nigh, he *wished* both his sons to be with him."

Why does the narrator put the commonplace registry of birth into the present tense, but employ the past to describe the longing of a dying father for his sons?

Here are questions in seeking answer to which we get but cold comfort from the school grammars, Greek or Latin, which we teachers have been so faithfully fumbling these many years. One tells us that the present is employed "to give a more animated statement of past events"; another that it is used "as a lively representation of the past"; a third informs us that "this usage, common in all language, comes from imagining past events as going on before our eyes". One of the very latest says: "In vivid narration the speaker may for the moment feel that he is living the past over again and so may use the present tense in describing events already past." Then follow three examples, and the third is the first sentence in the *Anabasis*! What? Did Xenophon feel that he was "living over again" the days when Parysatis was brought to bed of her two sons? Is Livy's soul enthralled by the vividness of past events when he gives us in his third chapter that long line of reigns and genealogies:

"Silvius deinde regnat; is Aeneas Silvium creat. Agrippa inde regnat. Proca deinde regnat; is Numi-

torem procreat; Numitori regnum Silviae gentis legit".

Not one whit more, I warrant, than the Evangelist when he wrote, using the *past* tense: "Abraham begat Isaac; and Isaac begat Jacob; and Jacob begat Judas and his brethren."

But I am sure that I need not press this point further, for it must be perfectly obvious to you that the present tense in the sentences which I have quoted from Pepys, from Xenophon, and from Livy, is not accounted for under the usual treatment of the *Historical Present* in our school-books. The term itself is a bad one, for it does not suggest the vivid narration of past events which it undoubtedly is the function of the present tense sometimes to express; and the explanations are defective because they do not account for the statement, in this tense, of dull, inanimate, historical facts. It must be clear that we have here two distinct usages which ought not to be confused and treated under the same head in a single section of a grammar. There is nothing very new in what I am saying; and I fancy that the distinction which should be drawn is familiar to not a few of you. If I repeat it here, it is because new school grammars and editions of the authors continue to ignore it, and because I remember how absurdly inconsistent the section on the historical present and the examples under it used to seem to me in the grammars which I studied when I was a schoolboy. The distinction was drawn by Professor Lane in his Latin Grammar, and it is

recognized by Professor Gildersleeve in his invaluable new book on the Syntax of Classical Greek. Into the question whether the two kinds of presents are the same in origin or not, I do not now enter. I am talking now merely of usage by the Greek and Latin authors in their writings as we have them; not of the origins of usage. And I will venture here to pause and to interject the remark that I am strongly of opinion that some of us are attaching too much attention to "origins" in a good many departments of our teaching. The first and all important thing is that our pupils, whether in schools or in colleges, should be able to *read the authors with understanding and appreciation*; and it will in general be found that this twofold task—and particularly the latter part of it, the appreciation of the authors—is all that a schoolboy, or a college student until he gets a good deal more than half-way through his college course, can accomplish. He ought to be taught what each word or phrase meant to the writer who penned it; he need know nothing about the semi-civilized Indo-European who first mouthed it out, or something like it. He must know the manners and customs of the time about which he is studying, not necessarily their evolution up from prehistoric man. It matters very little to him how the adjective *nobilis* is formed; whether from *no-* and *-bilis* or from a hypothetical **nobus* and *-ilis*; but it ought to be impressed upon him that the word doesn't mean *noble* at all; just as he ought to know that when people called Cicero a *novus*

homo they didn't mean that he was a *bourgeois* or of a low, mean family. And so with our present tense; never mind its origin till much later, if ever; but let us make sure that our students see what it indicates.

There is, then, in the usage of the Greek and Latin authors an *Annalistic* or *Note-book* present, which is employed in brief historical or personal memoranda, "to note incidents day by day or year by year as they occur." Of this present I have given examples already, and those of you who keep diaries make use of it very often. And there is also a *Present of Vivid Narration*, a rhetorical device, used consciously to represent with animation a past action as if it were going on at the time of writing.

One of the best examples of this kind of present is to be found in the first book of the *Æneid* in the description of that storm which *Æolus* blows up at the request of *Juno*:

"When this was said, with spear reversed he smote the mountain on its side; and instantly the winds, as it were a battle line, rush forth and sweep over the lands in a cyclone. They've settled on the sea (observe the perfect definite), and *Eurus* and *Notus* side by side upheave it all from its very bottom—*Africus*, too, teeming with the hurricane—and huge are the waves which they roll to the strand. Then ensues the cry of men and the creaking of cordage. Clouds of a sudden pluck away the daylight from the *Teucrians'* eyes; dark night broods upon the sea. The heaven hath thundered (perfect definite again)

and the ether flashes with fire on fire."

Wonderful indeed is the vivifying effect of this present when it is rightly used and in moderation. It can be overworked: witness those English novels written by "the Duchess", a great favorite, I believe, with the ladies, though, of course, men never read her. I am told that the present of vivid narration is the only tense which she employs. But we must beware of seeing a vivid present where it is not really found; and this brings me to another passage which stands a little earlier in the same book of the *Æneid*.

The goddess Juno, you remember, utters an impassioned complaint at the apparent escape of the Trojans from her vengeance, and then:

Talia flammato secum dea corde volutans,
Nimborum in patriam, loca feta furentibus austris,
Æoliā venit.

"To *Æolia* doth she come." Here indeed in *venit* we do have an example of the present of vivid narration. But what follows? I translate thus:

"Here, in a cavern huge, King *Æolus* subdues unto his rule the struggling winds and sounding tempests, bridling them with chains and in a dungeon. They in resentment chafe about the barriers while the mountain mightily resounds; high in his hold sits *Æolus*, sceptre in hand, and calms their spirits and abates their angry passions." Now it is not uncommon to hear these six presents, *premit*, *fremat*, *fremunt*, *sedet*, *mollit* and *temperat* explained

as historical presents, like *venit*; but they are far from being such. The passage contains a description of the functions of the god of the winds, who is of course thought of by the poet as an active existing divinity. He is part of the machinery of the gods, and any ancient reader of Virgil who believed in the imported Greek mythology must believe in *Æolus* along with the rest. No room for a historical present here, for we are dealing with pure present time. And the next sentence, as it happens, contains a point of syntax which is, in my opinion, constantly misinterpreted even in our best editions. It reads thus:

Ni faciat, maria ac terras caelumque profundum
Quippe ferant rapidi secum verrantque per auras.

"Imagine him not doing so, they would surely whirl along with them impetuously seas, lands, and the deep vault of heaven, and sweep them through the air."

This conditional sentence is not a "condition contrary to fact"; it does not denote unfulfilled or non-occurrent action. It is true that in the old Latin of Plautus we do find such conditions sometimes expressed by the present subjunctive; it is true also that we find in Augustan poets, perhaps in Virgil, some imitations of this usage. But ours is not one of them; it is nothing but the common use of the subjunctive in a future condition; it is equivalent to "If he should cease to restrain them, they would whirl forth".

And there is another very striking example of this same sort of a present subjunctive also introduced

by *ni*, in the sixth book of the *Æneid*, which is also wrongly interpreted as a contrary to fact condition in many editions. It is the more interesting to us to-day because it is preceded by an excellent example of the present of vivid narration, and indeed the whole passage is animate with life. Æneas and the Sibyl have begun their descent to Hades; and the poet first sketches in a few verses the awful shapes that meet their eyes—Fear, Famine, the Furies, the trees of dreams, the stables of the centaurs, Chimæra, Hydra and Gorgons. In telling of all these he uses that same present tense which he used in his account of Æolus—the *real* present, for they are as truly existent as Æolus himself. But in the next verse comes the picture of Æneas' sudden fright. The first word is a present tense, *corripit*, no longer a true present, but the present of vivid narration:

Corripit hic subita trepidus formidine ferrum
Aeneas, strictamque aciem venientibus offert,
Et, ni docta comes tenues sine corpore vitas
Admoneat volitare cava sub imagine formae,
Irruat, et frustra ferro diverberet umbras.

"Here in the terror of sudden alarm Æneas plucks forth his brand and presents the drawn point at them as they come, and let not his wise mentor warn him that they are but semblances of lives without flesh, flitting in hollow mockery of form, he would be charging them and beating the shadows this way and that with his brand, and all in vain."

Could anything be more vividly put? It is hardly translatable¹ in its lively anticipation into our sober English tongue. How can an editor find it in his heart to note: "the present subjunctive is used here for the imperfect in a condition contrary to fact"? Virgil, I warrant, never dreamed of such a thing. How could he, starting with a vivid present, follow it up with the self-denying ordinance of a contrary to fact idea?

But with regard to these clauses with *ni*, there is perhaps something to be said for the editors, who have not, poor men, the time to investigate every little point for themselves. The fact is that such clauses have never been thoroughly brought together from the different authors and systematically treated in a proper manner. Even for single authors this has not been done. And something still more surprising—suppose you wished to study *ni*-clauses in Virgil. The first thing to do would be to collect them all. Easy enough, you say, from the Index to Virgil. But here is the surprising thing—there is no modern index to Virgil. Is not this remarkable, that with all the teachers and students who are engaged throughout the world on this author, there should be none who has compiled and published a complete index of words of this author, since Ribbeck published his epoch-making text fifty years ago? I recommend this very much needed work to your thoughts—why indeed should it not be a joint pro-

¹I should be sorry to have it thought that my translation is an attempt to render the "original" meaning of this subjunctive.

duction, the labor divided among members of this club?

But I must not linger too long over questions of syntax and usage of words, lest you should think me one of those soulless creatures called gerund-grinders, who are so constantly held up to mockery by the opponents of the Classics. There are puzzles enough in our field of study for students who have no taste for these. To keep for the moment to Virgil; how full of difficulties is, for instance, the sixth book of the *Æneid*. Although the fourth book, as generally and wrongly interpreted, is of more interest to the ordinary modern reader, because in it Virgil seems to make a modern romantic heroine out of Dido—a notion which of course he never had in his mind, for Dido is but an obstacle to the fulfilment of the mission of the Pilgrim of Destiny, *Aeneas, fatus profugus*, and she is striving to retard the destiny of Rome and must be brushed out of the way as relentlessly as Rome brushed her city Carthage out of the way—though the fourth book, I say, is commonly read with greater interest, yet it seems to me that it should have for the serious student by no means the attractions that are to be found in the sixth. As the ancient commentator Servius remarks: "All Virgil is full of knowledge, but this book holds the first place." And one of its attractions is the riddles and enigmas which it offers for our solution. It is perfectly certain that this book is the result of wide and deep study on Virgil's part into the writings of his predecessors,

both poets and Greek philosophers, on the nature of the soul and the state after death. It is certain also that the book was left uncompleted by its author, and this is the principal reason why it presents to us several all but insoluble problems. I need not touch upon the greater of them here; indeed time would not admit of it, and you must have pondered them for yourselves. Why, for instance, are the heroes—the *bello caduci*—in the fore part of Hades, almost in a place of punishment, instead of in Elysium with Anchises? Are they to remain there forever, or do they pass on after a period of waiting? I shall not attempt to-day to answer this question, though I have an answer which all but satisfies me. I would not have it wholly satisfy me, for if it did, part of the attraction of the book would be gone. Instead, I shall speak merely of two small points: the Golden Bough, and the two Gates of Sleep.

A huge book in three volumes has been written as you know by Mr. Frazer on the Golden Bough. It is an invaluable mine of folklore and one of the chief treasures of the students of that fascinating subject, Comparative Religion. Yet I cannot see how anybody can agree with Frazer's view that the golden bough of Virgil was a sprig of mistletoe, fatal to this view, as Andrew Lang has pointed out, is the fact that Virgil himself in his description of the golden bough *compares it to mistletoe*. Could there be a greater absurdity than the comparison of a thing to itself? Whatever the bough was, it

was not mistletoe. But the carrying of it as a passport into Hades was no invention of Virgil's. It had been used before. Charon recognized it when the Sibyl showed it, and it is natural to think that she herself had carried it on that former occasion when, as she tells Æneas, she went down with Hecate to the lower world. Virgil may have taken it out of some earlier poem now lost to us; but my own opinion is that pilgrims who visited the sacred places about Lake Avernus—and we know that pilgrimages to that vicinity lasted down to the end of heathendom—that pilgrims to the spot in Virgil's time were required to carry in their hands the branch of some tree, a branch which Virgil poetically calls the golden bough. No doubt such pilgrims would be told that some great hero had carried the branch when he was there before them.

As for the other point, about the two gates, here is again a much discussed question. You remember that Virgil says that one was made of horn and that by it true ghosts, *verae umbrae*, passed out; that the other was of ivory and that through it *deceptive dreams* were sent up to the world. Now Anchises lets Æneas out by this latter, the *ivory* gate. Why? *Quot editores, tot sententiae*, and little comfort to be got out of any of them. Old Servius said that the poet opened the gate of false dreams to Æneas in order to indicate that the whole thing was fiction! This comes pretty well from one who had told us that the book was *full of knowledge*. Neither will it do to say that Æneas goes out by the

ivory gate because he is not a *true ghost*; he is not a *deceptive dream* either! To say, as some do, that there is no point whatever in the choice of the ivory gate is a confession of ignorance of Virgil's method in composing this book. Nothing, I venture to say, absolutely nothing is set down here without a reason. We must be dealing here with a point of doctrine inherited from the past. The best explanation of the choice has been given, I believe, by my friend Dr William Everett of Adams Academy in Quincy. It is simple and wholly without those complicated theories which some scholars have called to their aid. There was a very widespread belief, which we find in the Greek and Latin authors from Plato to Ovid, that dreams *before midnight* were deceptive dreams. The ivory gate would therefore be open before midnight, and the poet, in letting Æneas out by this gate, merely means to indicate that he left Hades before midnight. He merely indicates the time in a poetical manner. If you look back through the book you will find here and there poetical indications of the time that was passing (though none so vague to us as this), from the hour when just before sunrise Æneas started upon the descent. He spent therefore considerably less than 24 hours in going and returning. So, too, Dante, the great pupil and imitator of Virgil, *indicates* by mere passing allusions here and there the time which he spent on his journey. I am bound to say that this explanation of Dr Everett's, which was published in the *Classical Review*, has not met

with that general acceptance which I had expected for it. Particularly the Germans scorn it; perhaps it is too simple for them. But neither do I feel *absolutely* certain of it myself; we cannot hope to know everything. For example, have you ever found out why it was that Virgil, in his account of the boat race, picked out the particular Roman families which he *does* pick out to give them the honor of being descended from the comrades of Æneas? It is a very curious choice: "Mnestheus", he says, "from whom comes the house of Memmius; Sergestus, from whom the house of Sergius, and Cloanthus, from whom thy race, O Roman Cluentius." Think of it—Sergius and Cluentius! We know of only three or four Sergiuses in Roman history, and the only one of any consequence is Sergius Catiline the conspirator, for whom Virgil certainly had no admiration, since he puts him in Tartarus, poised over a precipice and terrorstruck at the awful faces of the Furies. Almost the only Cluentius that we know is Cicero's client, a man of very shady character indeed, in the defence of whom Cicero afterwards said that he had thrown lots of dust in the eyes of the jury. Of Virgil's reason for choosing Memmius something can be guessed. It seems probable that the family of Memmius claimed Venus, if not for their ancestress, at least for their patroness, and this in turn may account for Lucretius's beautiful opening address to Venus in his poem dedicated to one of that family. It may be that the Sergian and Cluentian families boasted some such connection

with the great Æneas, and possibly some light might be thrown on this puzzling question by collecting and studying all the passages in which Virgil singles out for mention Roman families that were existing in his day. Possibly, again, it might lead to nothing. I said a moment ago that we could not hope to know everything. Why, even Cicero, our great model, even Cicero didn't know everything about Latin *syntax*, if I may return for a moment to that fearsome subject.

For example, he once used a preposition before *Piræus* instead of treating it as the name of a town and so using it without a preposition; and in a letter to Atticus practically admits that he doesn't know whether he was right or not. A more famous example was that of the inscription which Pompey was going to have cut upon his new temple of Victory. He wished to inscribe his name and the fact that the temple was dedicated in his third consulship; but he didn't feel sure whether he ought to say *consul tertium* or *consul tertio*. After anxious consideration he referred the matter *ad doctissimos civitatis*—and naturally enough the *doctissimi* disagreed. Finally he consulted Cicero, and that greatest of authorities, being unwilling to commit himself, said: "Suppose you don't write either termination, but simply stop at *t*, and say *consul tert*."—which was accordingly done. And we cannot be too grateful to Cicero for leaving us this warning against being cocksure about matters of syntax.

This little story teaches another lesson. You will

observe that Pompey did not leave the language of his inscription to be selected by his architect, but consulted those whose business it was to know about such things. It would be well if his example were followed in modern times. What extraordinary specimens of language and of the alphabet do our architects inflict upon us in their inscriptions on public buildings, and even upon university buildings. Take a simple point, this matter of Roman numerals. Since the twentieth century came in, how often we see MCM used for 1900. This is, of course, an abbreviation, and is no more in place than an apostrophe and two zeros would be; or "naughty-naught" as the students call it. We do find abbreviations of numerals in Roman tombstone Latin, and in carelessly made inscriptions where the stone cutter has not carefully calculated his space; but I venture to say that we shall not find IV, IX, or similar abbreviations in any carefully made public inscription of the classical Romans. Then again, if our modern inscription is to be in their Latin language, the letter M should not be used at all; for, of course, it does not stand for the numeral until the second century A D. The proper numeral sign should be employed, which looks something like an 8 turned on its side. But if the inscription is to be English, why use *Roman* numerals in it? Our Arabic figures are far handsomer and infinitely less clumsy than the Roman numerals, and we can be pretty sure that the Romans, who were the most practical people that ever lived before Americans were invented, would

have been quick to give up their bungling method had they been acquainted with the Arabic.

I have spoken of abbreviations. Much is to be learned from them in various ways. A very interesting deduction has lately been made from them by Professor Traube, the eminent Latin palæographer. There are, as you know, in the Vatican Library, two illustrated MSS of Virgil. About the age of one of these, the *Romanus*, there has been much discussion. Formerly it was thought to have been written in the fourth century; but more recently arguments have been adduced pointing to a later date, and now Traube has shown from certain abbreviations found in it that it cannot possibly be earlier than the sixth century.

The illustrations of these two MSS of Virgil deserve, I think, far more attention than is paid to them in the teaching of Virgil in our schools. In one or two of our editions there are rude cuts in outline made from pretty old engravings from them; but these give you no idea whatever of the originals, which are not outline drawings, but regular paintings in the miniature style. The Vatican Library, under the very liberal new policy of his Holiness, the present Pope, himself a Latin scholar of much ability, has lately published photographic facsimiles of these two MSS including all the illustrations. Unfortunately the edition is limited in number and the price is high, but the books ought to be found in every great library: *e g.* that of Columbia University. It would add greatly to the interest of

schoolboys and schoolgirls who are studying Virgil if they had copies of these ancient pictures before them. And in these days of universal photography it ought not to be a difficult thing to bring to pass. The teacher might get permission to make photographs with his own camera from the library copy of the book, or if he is not himself an expert in photography, he is pretty sure to find among his pupils or acquaintances somebody to do it for him. Or this club might cause a set of photographs to be made and sold at a nominal price to its members. There is an excellent article in French by De Nohlac about the pictures, which might well be translated to accompany them if the scheme which I have suggested were carried out.

But to return to Cicero: not only was he doubtful about some points, but we are much more doubtful about many points which concern him or the understanding of his writings. For instance, we talk of the *style* of Cicero, as if he had but *one* style. But what does he say about this himself? At the age of sixty, he thus writes to Papirius Paetus:

"What do you think about my style in letters? Aren't they in the *sermo plebeius*, the vulgar tongue? Yet one doesn't use the same tone in all his writings. For what analogy is there between a letter and a speech in court, or an address at a public meeting? Even in court I don't make a habit of handling all my cases in the same style. Private suits of slight importance I plead in the plainer style; those that affect a man's civil status or reputation, in the more

ornate style; letters I compose in the language of everyday life—*verbis cotidianis*."

Here, then, are at least three different styles which we may expect to find at the same period in our great model, and this ought to be—but isn't—a warning to those who think that they can reach the exact date of a speech from the style employed in it. And then another interesting question about Cicero: what was his personal feeling about religion? This is one of the most difficult questions to answer about any man; on no topic is a man really more reserved, open or even dogmatic as he may seem to be. We may be pretty sure that the real Cicero does not express himself openly about his personal religion in his public speeches; and in his philosophical works he is rather the expounder of systems, of theories, and then again of ethics, than of religion in the strictly personal sense. There remains to us no source of knowledge on this point except the collection of over 700 of Cicero's *Letters*. I have looked them through this summer in the hope of gleaning information on this and several other subjects in which I am interested. I can tell you therefore from my own observation that there are only a few passages in the letters which throw any light on the subject of Cicero's personal religion; and that of these only two seem to me very significant. Both are addressed to his wife,—but who can mention her without pausing for a moment to marvel over that other puzzle of Cicero's divorce of Terentia after over 30 years of married life, when he was more

than 60 years old, followed as it soon was by his marriage with a rich young girl, his ward, and his prompt divorce of her? But we have no time for this interesting problem to-day. The first of the two passages in the letters to which I have referred was written by Cicero in one of those moments of despair and bitterness when the heart speaks out. On his way into exile he writes back from Brundisium to Terentia: "I only wish, my dear, to see you as soon as possible and to die in your arms, since neither the gods whom *you have worshipped* with such pure devotion, nor men, whom *I have spent my time in serving*, have made us any return." This difference between the faith of a woman and the worldliness of a man is only too often illustrated in our modern life. The other passage is of a similar nature, though it was written nearly ten years later. He had been melancholy, anxious, and a burden to those about him; "but all these uneasy thoughts", he writes, "I have got rid of and ejected. The reason of it all I discovered the day after I parted from you. I threw up pure bile during the night, and was at once so much relieved that it seemed to me some god worked the cure. To this god, you, after your wont, will make full and pious acknowledgment."

No intention expressed, you perceive, of making any such acknowledgment himself. This function is to be left to a woman.

These two passages which I have called significant may seem slight evidence on which to base one's

opinion of a man's attitude toward religion, and they would indeed be slight were it not that they fall in exactly with the general attitude of educated men in the age in which Cicero lived. Perhaps there never was an age in which unbelief was wider spread. The genuine old Roman gods (except Lares, Penates and Genius, that is to say except the family gods) were all but forgotten, and the proper way to worship them had become a topic for antiquarian research. The Romans of course had never had a mythology of their own such as the Greeks had—that is, a history of the dealings of divine beings with one another and with men. What is sometimes thought of as Roman mythology—I mean the stories found in Virgil, Ovid and Horace about gods and heroes—are all Greek, not Roman at all, and in Latin literature they really belong later than the time of Cicero. These Greek stories were commonly regarded, Cicero says, as idle tales. In his day the best educated men were sceptics or rationalists. Thus we see that even these two little passages may be considered as pretty trustworthy indications of one side of the character of Cicero.

It goes without saying that the letters are a perfect mine of information on all sorts of topics relating to the character and life of Cicero. For example: it is very interesting to read, in such confidential epistles as he wrote to Atticus, what he himself thought about his own speeches; how he laughed over the way in which he threw dust in the eyes of a jury; or how thickly he laid on the paint in orna-

menting his account of the Catiline affair. Then again his relations with Julius Cæsar come out most clearly in the letters which passed between them, or in Cicero's letters to others about Cæsar and Cæsar's views of *him*. What a pity that we do not try to bring these two men more closely together in our teaching. We deliberately separate them. We set them in different years of the school course and give our boys no chance to see how they played into each other's hands or against each other. We lead our boys to think of them as always the deadliest foes; but the two had much in common. Both were lovers of literature. But what schoolboy ever hears of Cæsar as a literary man? They think of him as a soldier, or as a constructor of grammatical puzzles. And here again I yield to the temptation to speak of a point of syntax—but it shall be the last—and indeed I foresee that I am approaching the end of these somewhat rambling remarks. The point to which I now refer concerns the expression of the apodosis of a condition contrary to fact in indirect discourse. What a pity it was that Cæsar allowed himself to write the sentence which stands in the 29th chapter of the fifth book, which is, being translated, as follows:

"(He said) that he thought Cæsar was gone into Italy; otherwise, the Carnutes would not have formed their design of killing Tasgetius, and the Eburones, if he were at hand, *would not be coming* against the camp."

Here for *would not be coming* we have *venturos*

esse—and this unfortunate phrase has led to a special category in almost all our grammars. We are led by them to think that this is one of the regular ways of expressing in direct discourse an apodosis of action non-occurrent. But the fact is, I believe, that this is the only place in any Latin author where such a rule is borne out. In every other passage of the kind we have the future participle with *fuisse*. In my school grammar I have ventured to give an explanation of this unique phenomenon in Cæsar. In that passage, the *context* clearly shows that *venturos esse* represents the imperfect subjunctive of the direct discourse. But ordinarily the future participle with *esse* might seem to represent a future indicative. Hence, I believe that to avoid ambiguity the Romans did not try to express present time in apodoses of this kind in indirect discourse. It was easy to avoid it, and we ought to teach our boys to do so.

This whole matter of formal indirect discourse is disproportionately prevalent in Cæsar. I mean disproportionately as compared to its appearance in other writers. The result is that a disproportionate amount of space is given to it in our grammars and a disproportionate amount of time in our teaching. The poor boy struggles for weeks over its problems and when he has mastered them and gone on to other authors he finds very little opportunity to exercise in them the skill which he has got from the study of Cæsar. This consequence reminds me very much of another result which comes out of the stress which we are now laying upon what is called Reading at

Sight. I realize that I am now about to step on very ticklish ground; and I want to begin by saying that I am speaking my own thoughts, not those of my colleagues, for I do not know what they think on this topic; and that you must not think that I represent them or Harvard College or anybody or anything but myself. What I want to suggest to your thoughts is this: Our boys spend a vast amount of pains in learning to read Xenophon at sight, and then, after they have got the power, they find that there is no more Greek like Xenophon upon which they can exercise it. And to a less degree this is true of Latin. Power to read Cæsar at sight does not give a like power over any other author. Now understand me. I do not mean that we should abandon altogether the teaching of reading at sight. It does undoubtedly give a valuable kind of power over the language, but on the other hand I am by no means sure that it enables the student to carry on his studies of Greek and Latin, after he gets to college, with much greater ease than students prepared under the old regime; and it also seems to me that this long drill in a single author in Greek and a single author in Latin is not the way to encourage students to continue their studies of the classics in college. It opens up to them no vista whatever of the wide and noble fields of literature which are there to be found. The subject matter of Xenophon and Cæsar is too much of the same kind—and that of a very narrow kind, being distinctly military. It was not always thus in the school course. As

late as the time when I myself was at school we were required to read Sallust as well as Cæsar for the elementary examination; and in Greek we had to read not only Xenophon, but selections from Plato and Herodotus and a bit from Thucydides as well. Of course in the schooldays of our fathers and grandfathers the authors read in schools covered even a wider field. They were not all writers of *Attic* Greek or of *Classical* Latin—but what of that? they were *great writers*—immortal names—and they showed boys that there was something else in the Classics besides marching by parasangs and making speeches in indirect discourse. And boys were attracted to go on to read more of ancient literature. Parts of Greek plays were read; they are read still in English schools; there are books of selections from Greek tragedies and comedies prepared for the English schoolboy. Ask old gentlemen what Greek and Latin books they remember with most pleasure, and ten to one they will answer “the books of selections from prose and verse”. And how much pleasanter it must have been for the teacher to vary his reading with his pupils instead of trudging on year after year over the same road. And if pleasanter, how much better he must have taught!

“Oh”, but you will say, “We are teaching what the colleges require!” I reply: that answer might have done once upon a time, but it will serve its purpose no longer. Look at the changes in the college admission requirements during the past twenty years. Many of them are in answer to the demands of

secondary schools. In these days of organizations of teachers—of organizations such as yours, for instance—you may depend upon it that changes which you agree upon as good, and for which you can give strong reasons, are pretty sure to be adopted. I would not, then, have you love Cæsar less, or Xenophon less, but I would have you love Greek and Latin literature more, and I would have you make your pupils love it a *great deal* more. To be sure this means more work for a time for some teachers who have not familiarized themselves sufficiently with the literature, but what of that? We are all workers, and there stretches before us the many weeks—some people think the *too* many weeks—of the summer vacation. I don't know how it is with you, but with me that is about the only period in the year when I have any time for new work or for the review of old—time to sit under a tree with a pipe and get introduced to an ancient author whom I have never met before; or time to feel about me once more the charm of the immortals whom I learned to know long ago. And we must take some of that time, or some other time, to consider the question why we teach the classics at all. The old answers to this question will no longer serve. We can no longer contend that the acquisition of two dead languages and a certain knowledge of the contents of works composed over 2,000 years ago, are the best preparation which all boys and girls can have for *all* the demands of life. But neither is *any* subject, no matter how modern, an adequate preparation for all the de-

mands of life. Nobody could hold such a view of Physics or Psychology or Philosophy or Mathematics, and there is no longer any reason why it should be held of Classics. Two or three hundred years ago, this was not the case. Men *went to school* to the ancients as their best teachers in all matters, and the men of those days were not mistaken. When the Greek and Roman literatures were rediscovered after the Dark Ages and people began to read about the ancients, they found themselves inferior to those ancients in very many points of civilization and learning. They felt like children before their teachers; or rather, they had for the ancients a feeling of veneration which few children, I am afraid, have for their teachers to-day. They looked upon the ancients as endowed with the profoundest sort of learning, which had been handed down from one nation to another, from Egyptians to Greeks, from Greeks to Romans. They were dazzled by the great productions of Greece and Rome as compared with the barren centuries immediately preceding themselves. And it is wonderful how long this respectful attitude towards the ancients survived. It survived long after great world-changing inventions such as gunpowder or printing; long after epoch-making discoveries such as that of oxygen and of the circulation of the blood; and long after the composition of modern literatures. Shakspeare and Bacon came and went; Descartes and Leibnitz lived and died; a new world was discovered in America; and still people talked as if the ancients were in some mysterious

way a higher order of beings, superior in every thing to moderns. This opinion prevailed until half way through the nineteenth century, but nobody would seek to defend it now.

I remember that Professor F D Allen¹ once said that in former times men approached the ancients *on their knees*. We no longer assume this attitude. We do not study Greek and Latin because we think that the ancients were blessed with a higher civilization than our own and we cannot pretend that this study affords more than a partial training for life. The overidealization of the ancients has perhaps done more real harm to the cause of classical studies than any other factor. You remember how the Athenians got tired of hearing Aristides called *the Just*, and voted for his ostracism. So it was that men wearied of hearing that the ancients and their literature were infinitely superior to everything modern,—until at last it is asserted in some quarters that the classics have not even a *disciplinary* value in the education of young pupils. This notion is of course as mistaken as the other, and the people who put it forward are generally people who know little or nothing about the manner in which classical studies are pursued at the present time. The fact is, as I have said, that our attitude has wholly changed. Classical studies have in recent times shared in the great progress made in all studies. We now look upon the ancients as men like ourselves; they were human, therefore

¹From one of his unpublished lectures I have drawn much of the latter half of the preceding paragraph.

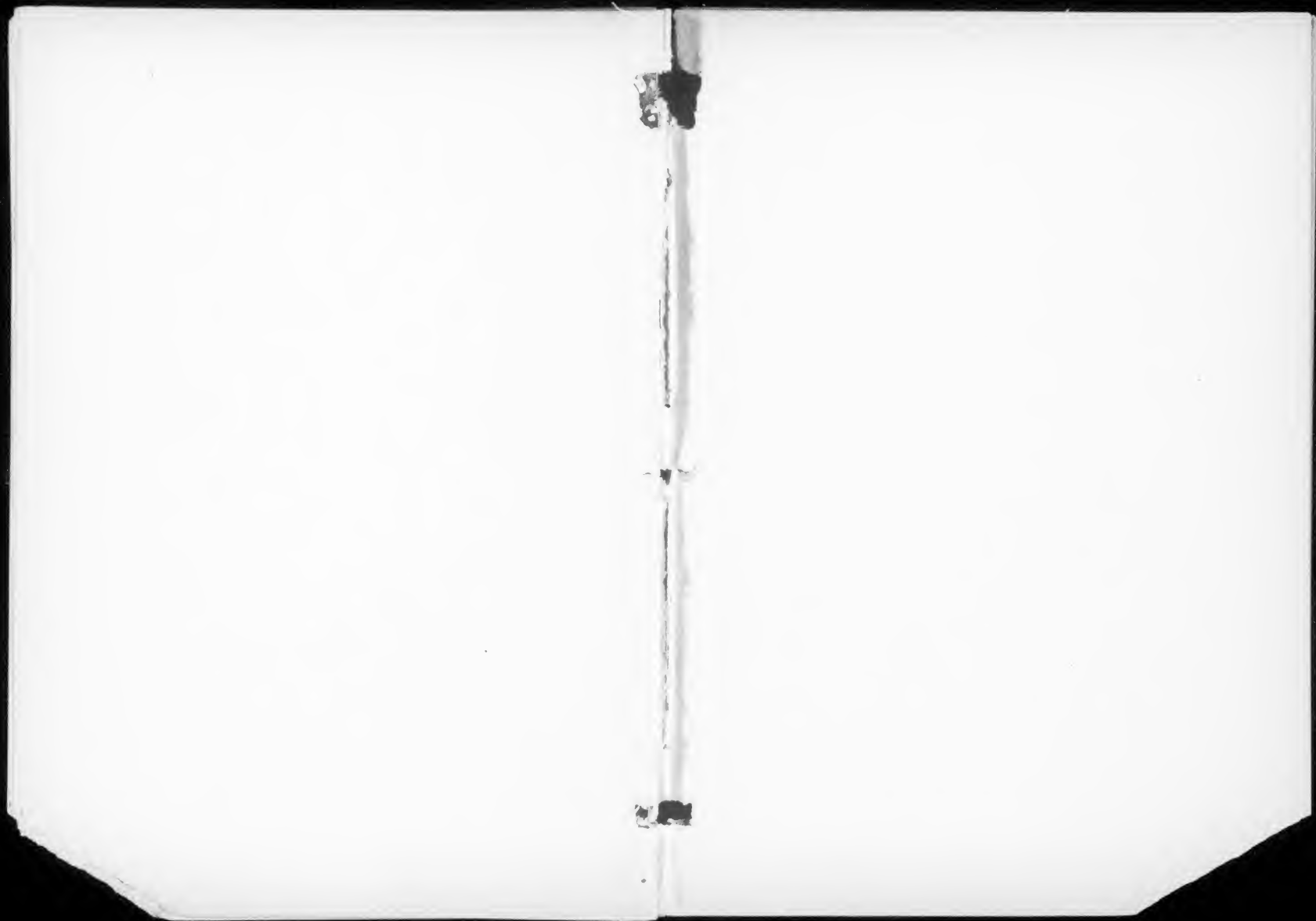
they often erred. We are not afraid to find fault with what is feeble or even really mistaken in ancient literature. Formerly, *all* ancient writers, not merely the greatest, were venerated; but we no longer think of applying the same standards of comparison to compositions of different periods or by different kinds of men or by the same man at different times in his life. While every scholar knows that almost all our forms of modern literature are based upon the Greek, and while it is universally admitted that in some literary forms the Greeks were gifted far beyond any modern people, yet on the other hand there are works in Greek which are merely trivial or even contemptible. Again, take the matter of civilization; nobody should pretend that the Greek civilization was superior to ours in all respects. If we could take a train and travel to ancient Athens, I think that we should find ourselves on the whole pretty uncomfortable there. To be sure, many beautiful things, far surpassing what we see in modern cities, would be all about us; but on the other hand we should miss many appliances for physical comfort which we have gained through modern invention and which we have come to think of as among the necessities of life. And more than this, it can scarcely be doubted that the ancient Athenians were vastly our inferiors in private morality, in humanity, and in regard for law. But the comparison of civilizations of different nations and ages is an extremely dangerous thing, if we try to say that one is higher than the other. This is because civilization

is not determinable mathematically. To one man civilization may mean *clean streets*, to another it may mean *sculpture*. We need to understand the man and his surroundings before we can postulate anything about his position in the scale of civilization.

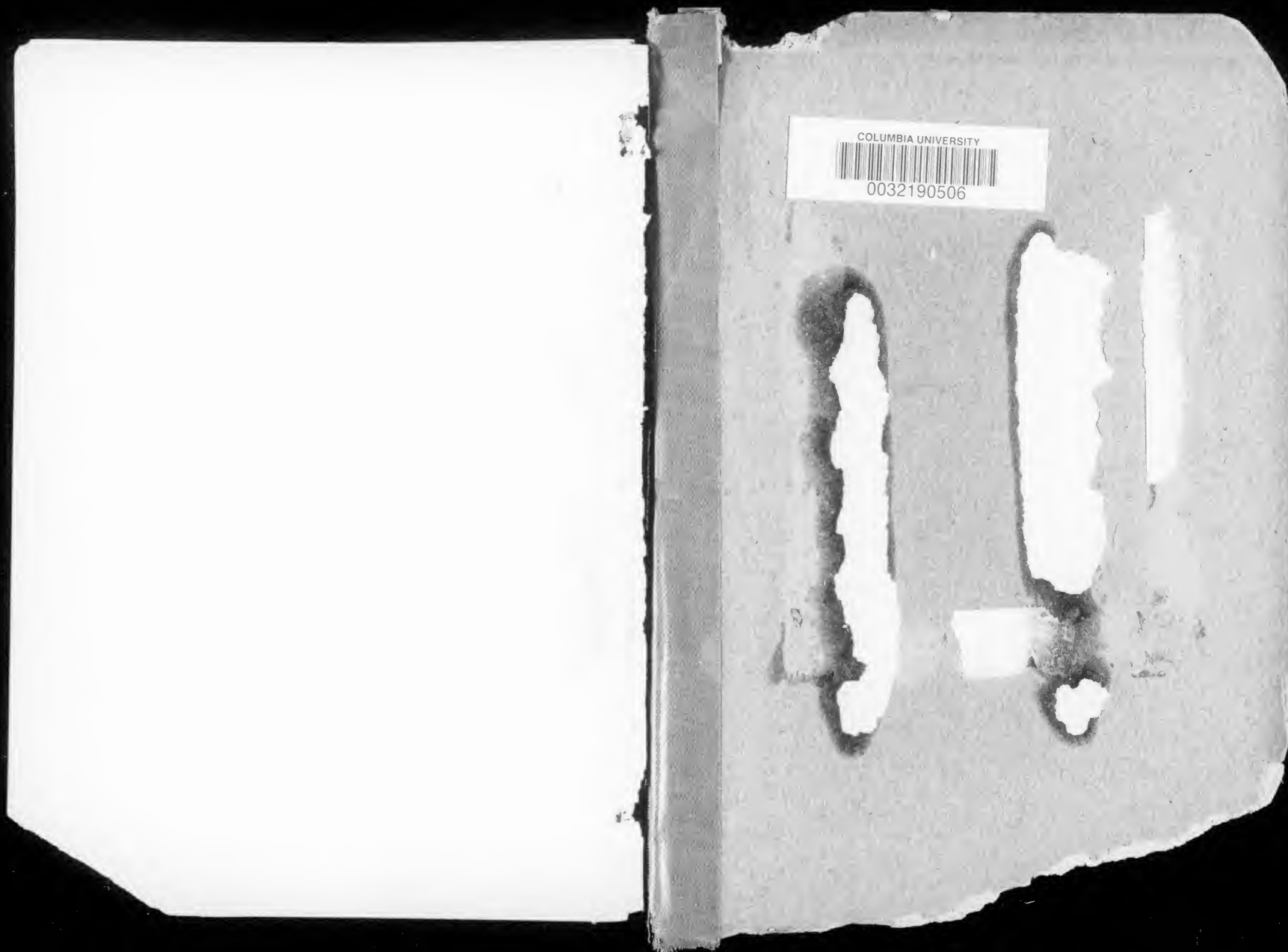
It is in this spirit that at the present time scholars are more and more approaching the ancients and their literature. We come to them wishing to *understand* them rather than to lavish upon them fulsome praise or to blame them for the lack of attributes which they could not possibly possess. I am reminded here of another saying of Professor Allen's. He once remarked: "We think of the Greeks and Romans as ancients; but when they were alive, they thought themselves as modern as anybody." This is the true spirit which ought to actuate us; to try to understand the ancients as men of like clay with ourselves, and to recognize in their literature the outgrowth of influences, and to seek to learn what these influences were.

But we must not be content with this. If a teacher has not tried to show his pupils not merely the influence of Virgil's own times upon Virgil, but also Virgil's influence on the history of poetic literature that has followed, he has not done his duty to that great author; he has left him as an isolated phenomenon. If a teacher has not tried to show his pupils that it is the influence of living thought that gives rise to what we call rules of syntax, not rules of syntax that govern the expression of living thought, he well deserves the opprobrious epithet of

gerund-grinder. If you reflect over what I have said about syntactical points to-day, you will see that the former is the line from which I have approached them. Thus it may appear that perhaps after all there has been a certain unity in what I have termed my "rambling remarks". Possibly you may recognize in them a kind of plea for the liberal literary study of the classics. Not literary study in the sense of that definition which I once heard: "Literary study; yes; that's where you all sit round and somebody reads the Greek out loud, and then you all say *fine!*" Not this at all—but that general literary study which must be based upon the understanding of three things: first, the influences of time and surroundings which led the author to write what he has written; secondly, what was the author's message to his contemporaries; thirdly, what ought to be his message to us. If we have no time for the study and teaching of these principles, let us consider whether we have not been devoting too much time to other things: to syntax, for instance, studied for the mere sake of syntax, studied, for example, for the sake of mere categories, a sort of pigeonholing, of which a great deal too much is done to-day in this land; or to reading at sight, for the sake of a facility which will lead to nothing but the passing of an examination; or to the marking of quantity, particularly of "hidden quantity", with which boys should seldom, if ever, be troubled. If we have been mistaken in these or in other ways, it is never too late to change our methods. For, depend upon it, the salvation of the study of the Classics is in nobody's hands but our own.







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